

DC
BATMAN
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EARLY MAY 93

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KNIGHTFALL



BATMAN



May 4, 1993
18
0 70992 30430 1

THEY SEPARATED
US, MY DEAR, WHEN
THEY LAST SENT
ME TO
ARKHAM...

GOTHAM ZOO

BUT
NOW I'M
FREE...

OO-
OOH?

CHIMPANZEE

WHZZZZZZZZZZ

CHANK

BLOOM

...AND
SO ARE
YOU.

OO-
OOO!
OOH!

CROSSED EYES DOTTY TEAS

BATMAN
CREATED BY
BOB KANE

TWEEDLEUM

TWEEDLEDEE

BREYFOG

RIDDLE

CORNELIUS STRIK

ZSASZ

VENTRILOQUIST

TWO-

FACE

JOKEB

POISON IVY

FILM FREAK

MAD HATTER

KILLER CROC

MAXIE ZEUS

AMYGDALA

SCARECROW

ALL OF
THEM -- AND
MORE --
RUNNING FREE
IN THE DARK...
HEAVILY ARMED...
TERMINALLY
DANGEROUS.

NOT
GOOD.

DESTINY

BUT
WHO DID
THIS TO ME?
WHO BROKE
THEM OUT OF
ARKHAM?!

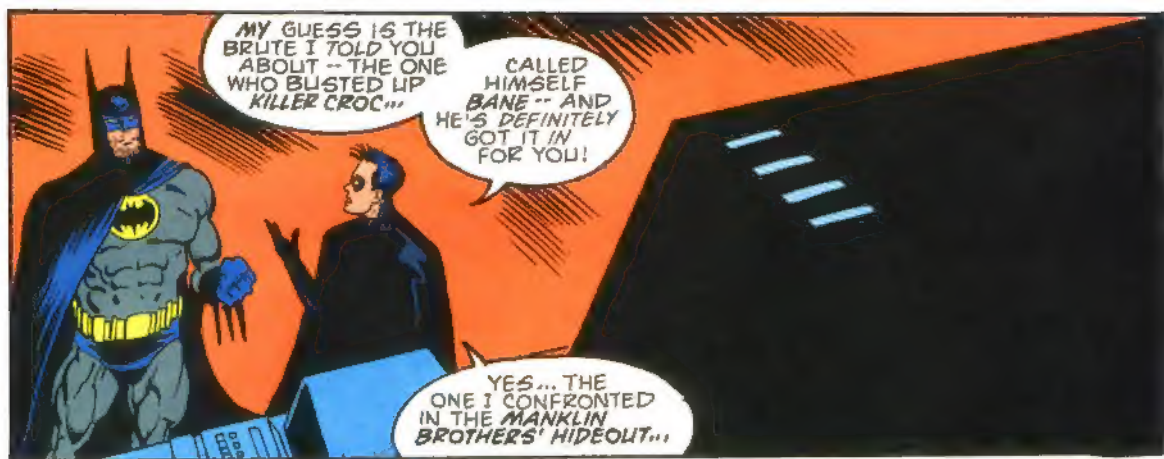
MOENCH

DOUG MOENCH
WRITER

NORM BREYFOGLE
ARTIST

ADRIENNE ROY COLORIST
RICHARD STARKINGS LETTERER

SCOTT PETERSON DENNY O'NEIL
JORDAN B. GORFINKEL EDITOR
ASST EDITORS



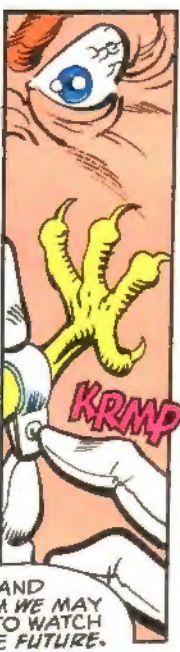


AND SINCE THE BIRD IS A FALCON, MY DEAR -- HARDLY INDIGENOUS TO GOTHAM -- IT MUST BE SOMEONE'S PET...

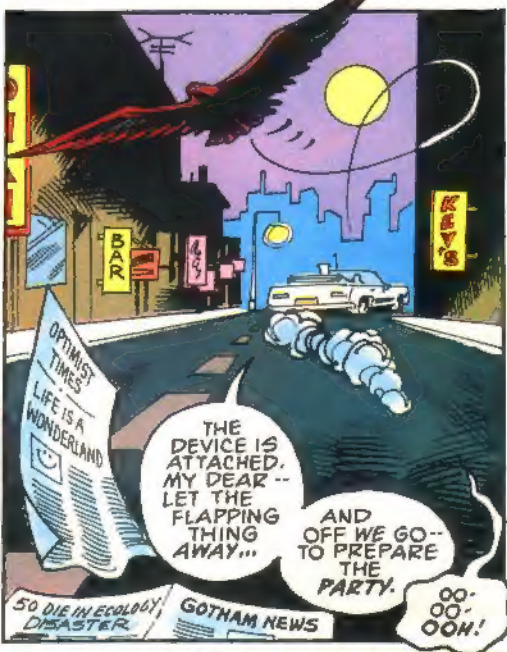
OO-OOH!

... SOME-ONE WHO IS APPARENTLY WATCHING US...

... AND WHOM WE MAY WISH TO WATCH IN THE FUTURE.



KRMP



OPTIMIST TIMES - LIFE IS A WONDERLAND

50 DIE IN ECOLOGY DISASTER

THE DEVICE IS ATTACHED. MY DEAR -- LET THE FLAPPING THING AWAY...

AND OFF WE GO-- TO PREPARE THE PARTY.

OO-OOH!

GOTHAM NEWS

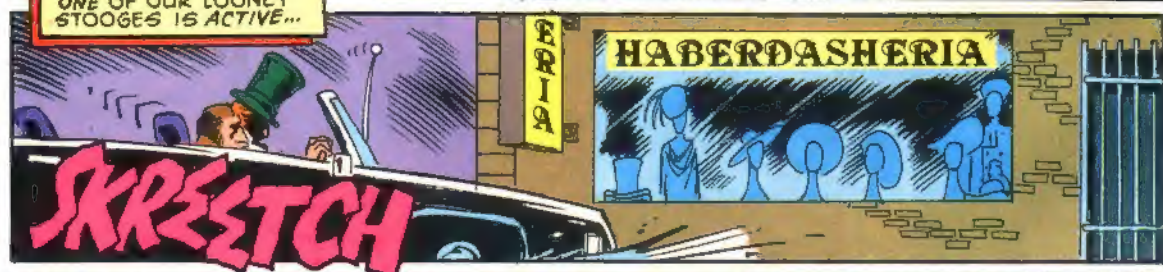


HE'S NOT COMIN' AROUND AGAIN -- MUST'VE FOUND HIS CHIMP AND DRIVEN ON UP THE SIDE STREET...

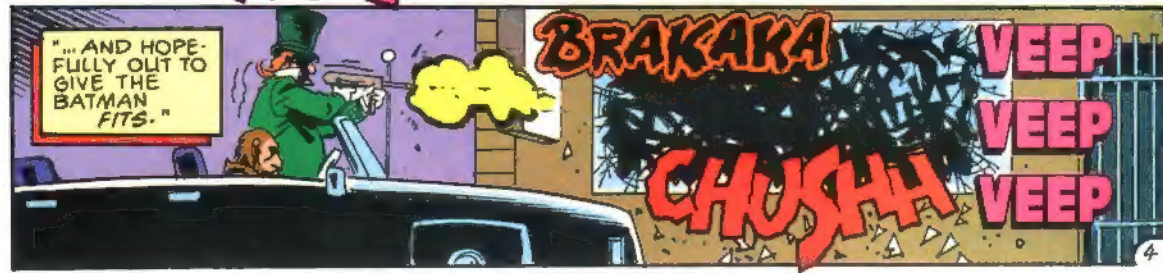
WHICH MEANS I'VE LOST HIM.

COME ON, TALON -- NOT MUCH TO REPORT TO BANE...

"... BUT AT LEAST ONE OF OUR LOONEY STOOGES IS ACTIVE..."



SKREETCH

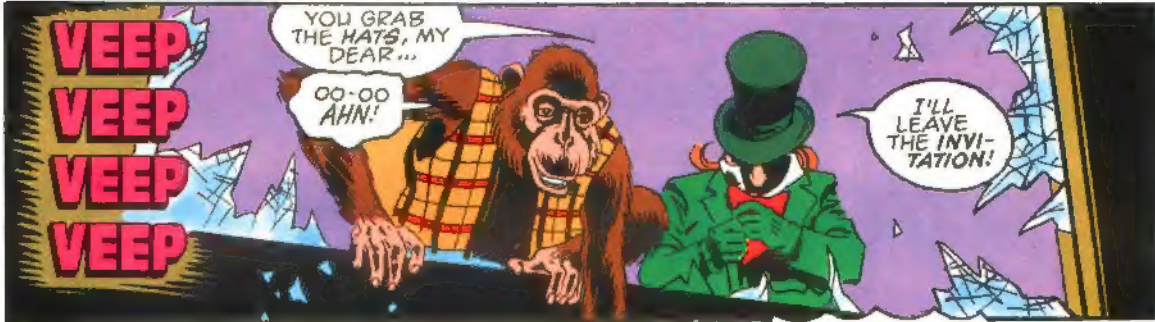


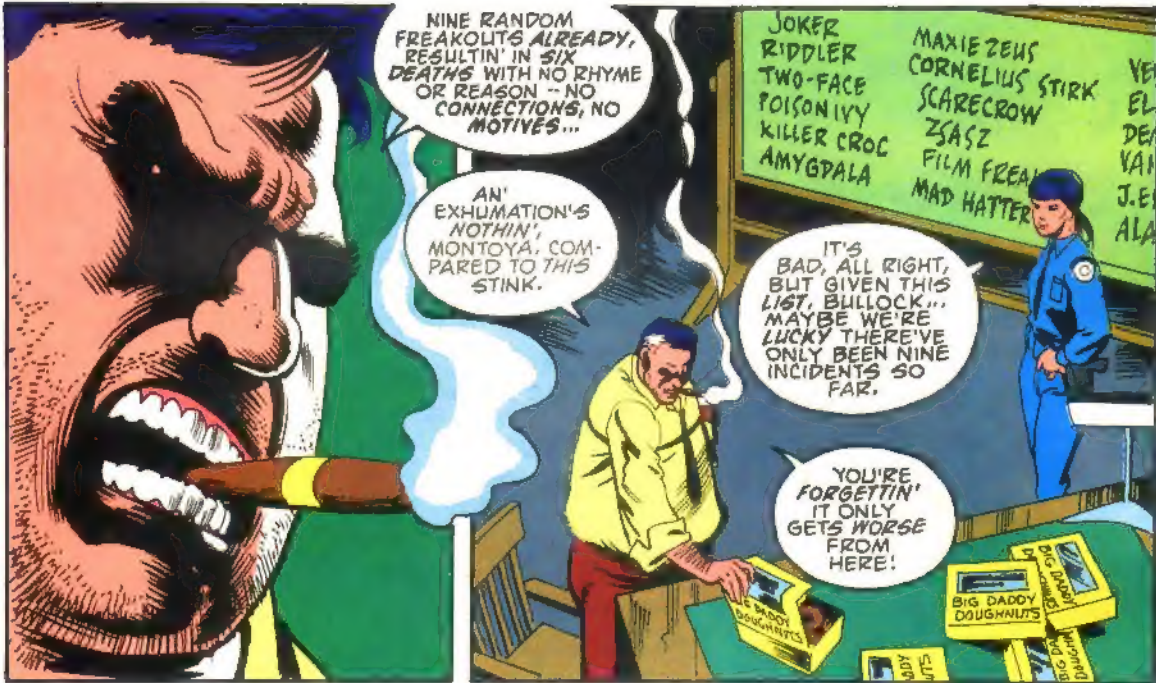
"... AND HOPEFULLY OUT TO GIVE THE BATMAN FITS."

BRAKAKA

CHUSHH

VEEP
VEEP
VEEP





NINE RANDOM
FREAKOUTS ALREADY,
RESULTIN' IN SIX
DEATHS WITH NO RHYME
OR REASON -- NO
CONNECTIONS, NO
MOTIVES...

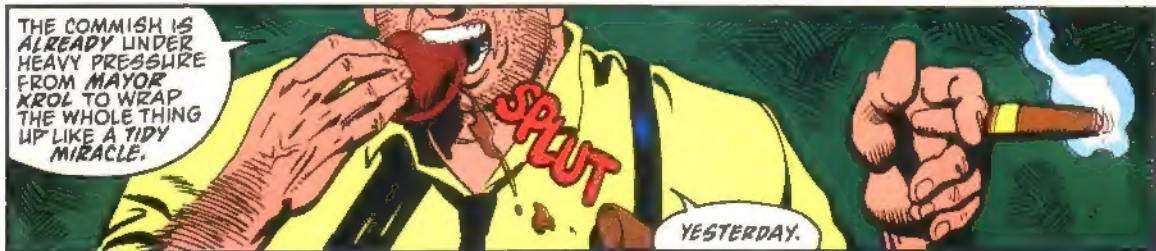
AN'
EXHUMATION'S
NOTHIN',
MONTOKA, COM-
PARED TO THIS
STINK.

JOKER
RIDDLER
TWO-FACE
POISON IVY
KILLER CROC
AMYGDALA

MAXIE ZEUS
CORNELIUS STIRK
SCARECROW
ZSASZ
FILM FREAK
MAD HATTER

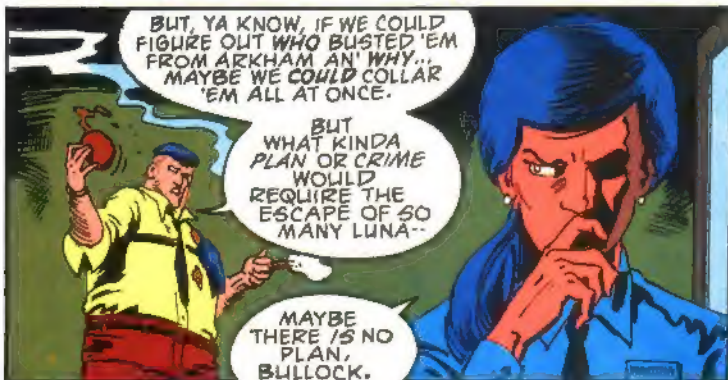
IT'S
BAD, ALL RIGHT,
BUT GIVEN THIS
LIST, BULLOCK...
MAYBE WE'RE
LUCKY THERE'VE
ONLY BEEN NINE
INCIDENTS SO
FAR.

YOU'RE
FORGETTIN'
IT ONLY
GETS WORSE
FROM
HERE!



THE COMMISS IS
ALREADY UNDER
HEAVY PRESSURE
FROM MAYOR
KROL TO WRAP
THE WHOLE THING
UP LIKE A TIDY
MIRACLE.

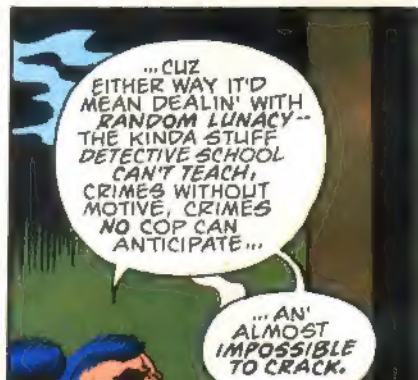
YESTERDAY.



BUT, YA KNOW, IF WE COULD
FIGURE OUT WHO BUSTED 'EM
FROM ARKHAM AN' WHY...
MAYBE WE COULD COLLAR
'EM ALL AT ONCE.

BUT
WHAT KINDA
PLAN OR CRIME
WOULD
REQUIRE THE
ESCAPE OF SO
MANY LUNA--

MAYBE
THERE IS NO
PLAN,
BULLOCK.



...CUZ
EITHER WAY IT'D
MEAN DEALIN' WITH
RANDOM LUNACY--
THE KINDA STUFF
DETECTIVE SCHOOL
CAN'T TEACH,
CRIMES WITHOUT
MOTIVE, CRIMES
NO COP CAN
ANTICIPATE...

...AN'
ALMOST
IMPOSSIBLE
TO CRACK.



YOU'RE THINKIN' SOMEONE
SPRUNG 'EM FOR THE
SHEER HELL OF IT,
MONTOKA?

OR, AT
MOST, A
SMOKE-
SCREEN --
TO DISTRACT
US WHILE
SOMETHING
ELSE
GOES
DOWN.

THEN THIS'S
BAD, BABE, WICKED BAD...



CAN'T
BE HILL
STREET
EVERY
DAY.



THE MAD
HATTER, ALL
RIGHT -- THE
FIRST OF THE
MAJOR ONES
TO MAKE
A MOVE...



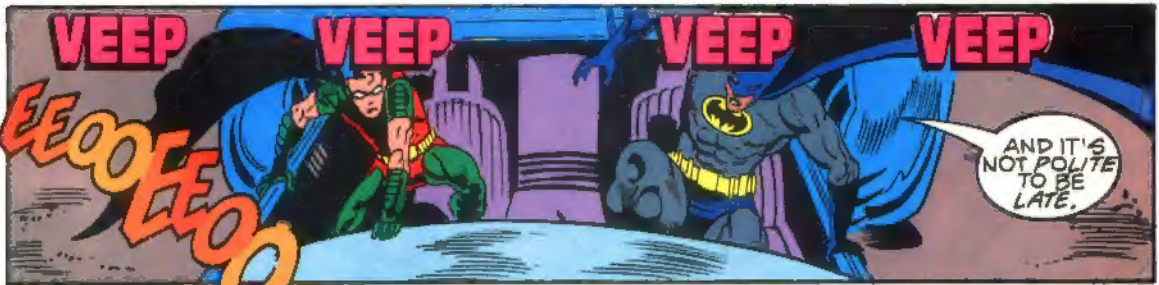
VEEP VEEP VEEP VEEP

Hold onto Your Hats!
JERVIS TETCH
Requests the Pleasure of
Your Company at
A TEA PARTY!
Date: TONIGHT
Time: ASAP
Place: TENNIEL EST!

THAT'S
SOME KIND OF
INVITATION
CARD?!

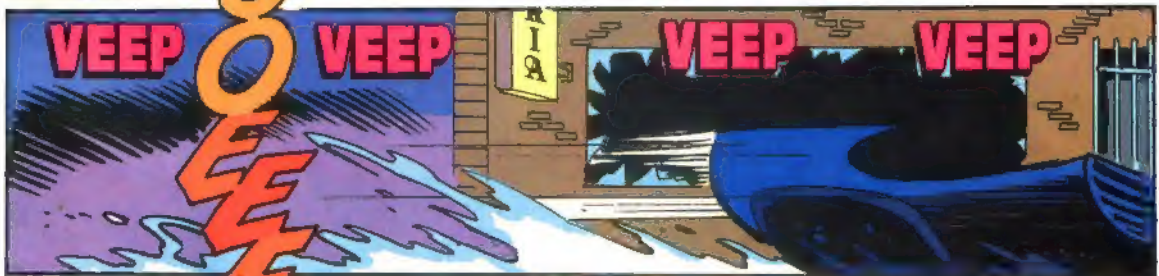
YES...
TO
TEA.

"AND
HE WANTS US
TO BE GUESTS OF
HONOR AT HIS
LATEST CELEBRATION
OF MADNESS."



VEEP VEEP VEEP VEEP

AND IT'S
NOT POLITE
TO BE
LATE.

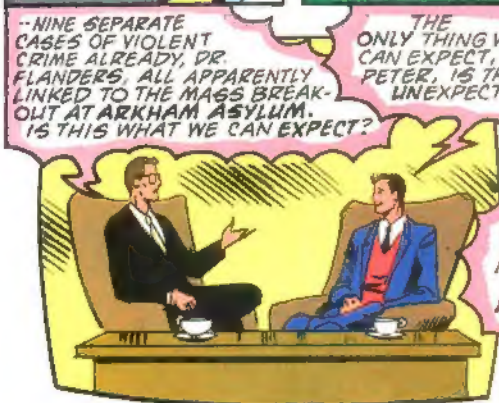
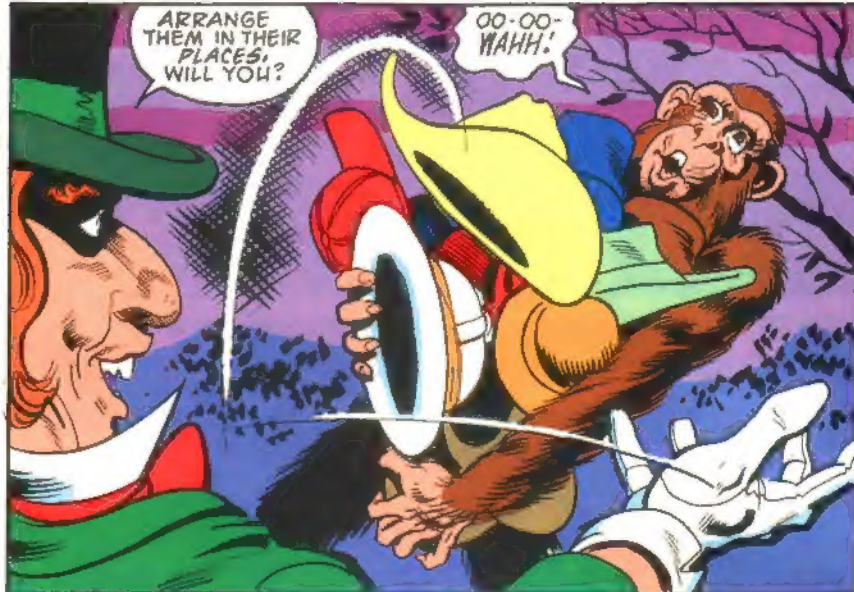


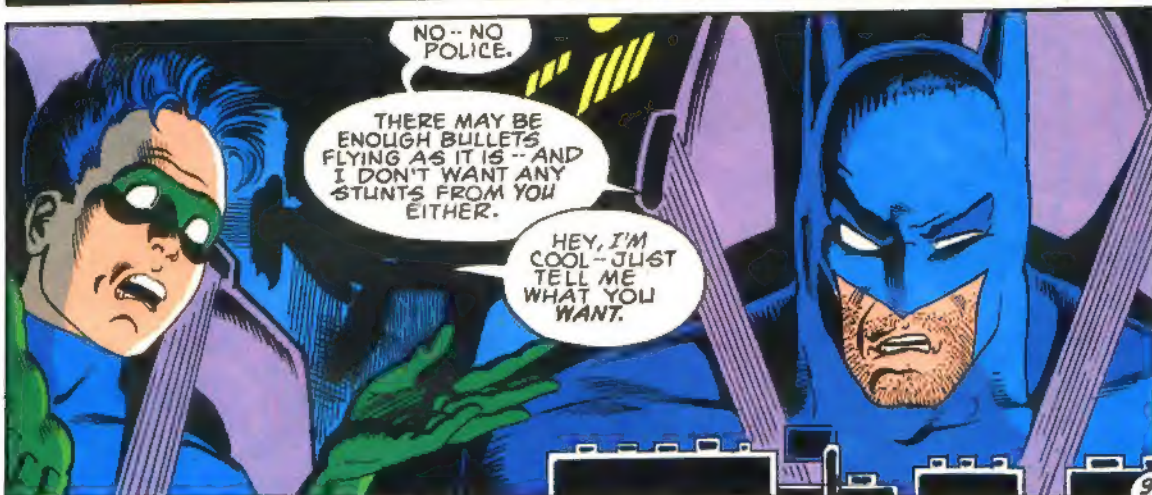
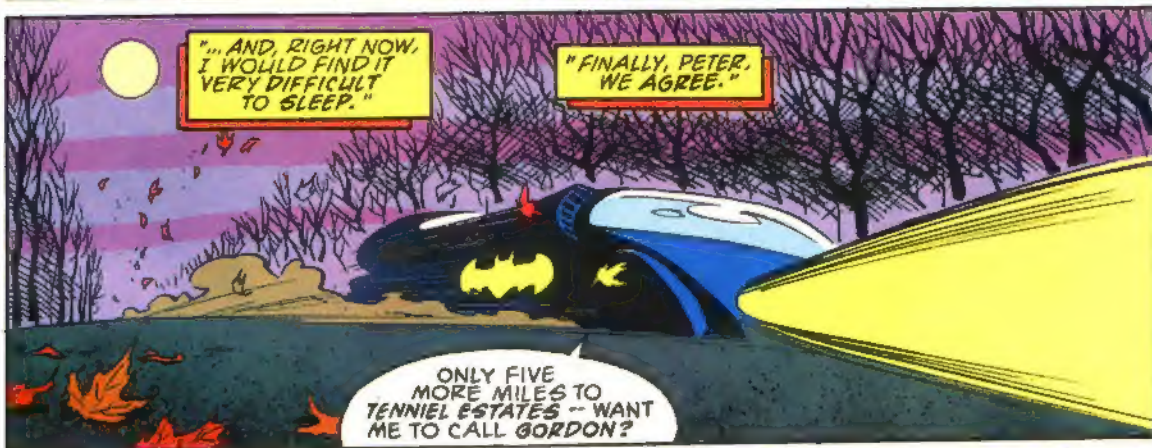
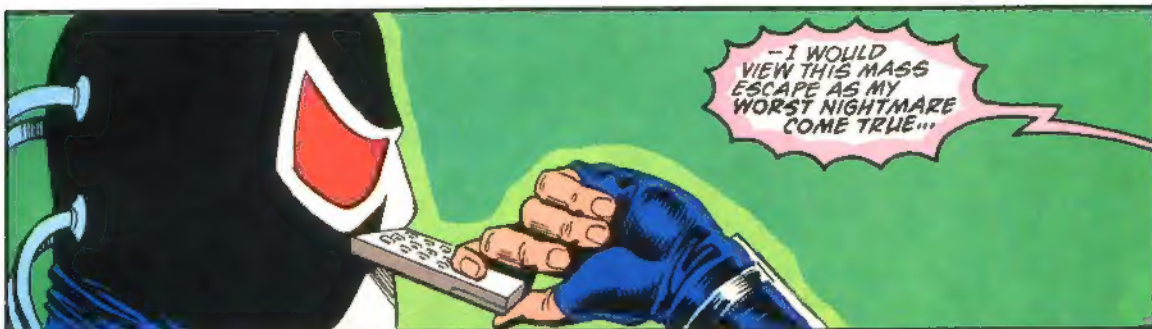
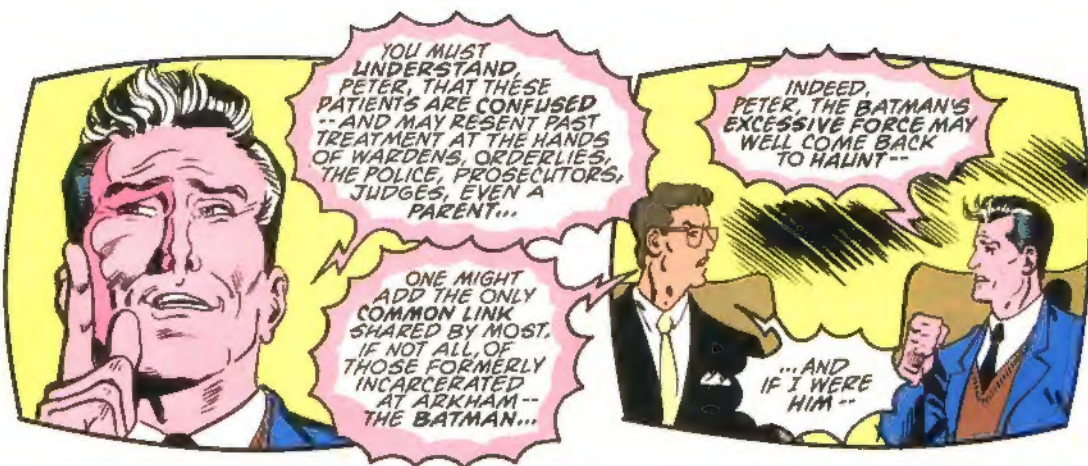
VEEP VEEP VEEP VEEP

VEEP VEEP VEEP VEEP

SKREECH

7







THERE MAY BE
OTHER "GUESTS"
AT THIS "TEA PARTY"
-- AND THEY MAY
STILL BE HEAVILY
ARMED.

YOU'RE
STRICTLY
BACKUP.

BUT--

RESENT ME
ALL YOU WANT--
BUT DON'T
FORGET
IT.

VRLOWW

WELCOME,
WELCOME, ONE
AND ALL!
APOLOGIES FOR
MAKING YOU LEAVE
YOUR WEAPONS AT
THE GATE, BUT THEY
WILL BE RETURNED
SHOULD THE
POLICE ARRIVE
BEFORE OUR
GUEST OF
HONOR.

RIGHT
NOW, IF YOU WOULD
BE GOOD ENOUGH TO
DON THE PARTY HATS
AT YOUR PLACE
SETTINGS... OUR
FESTIVITIES MAY
COMMENCE!

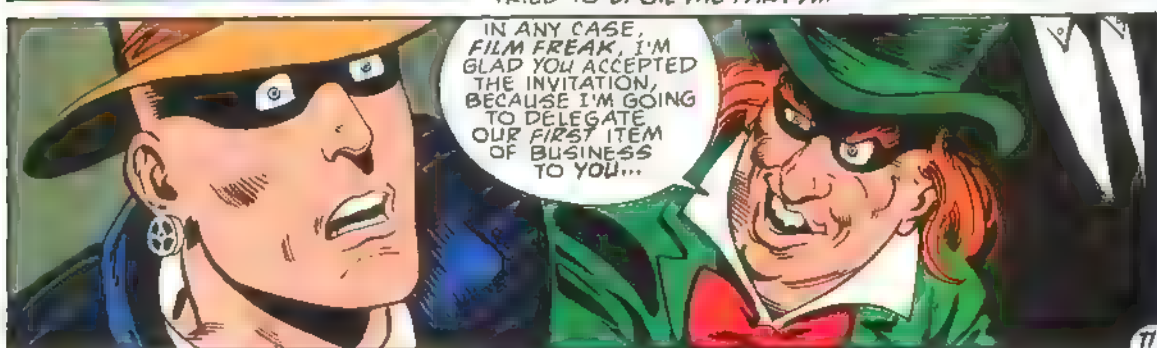
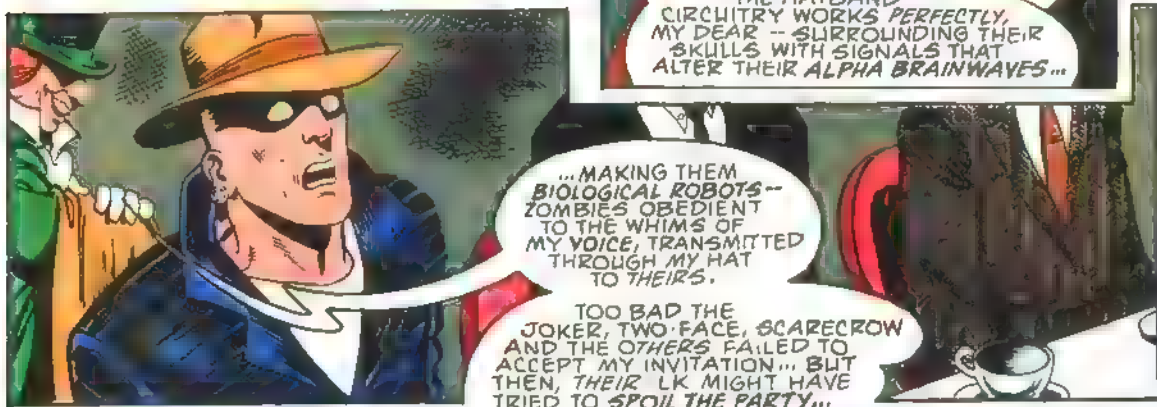
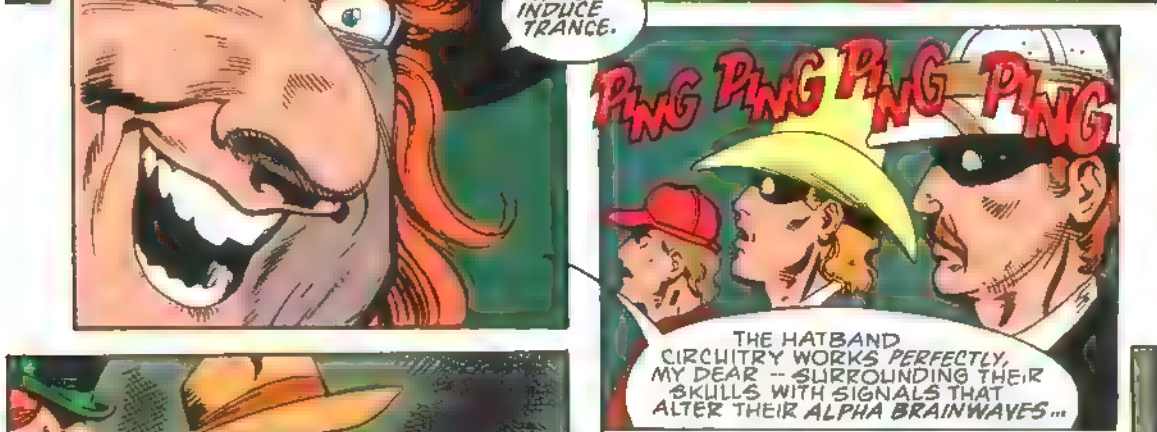
THIS IS
STUPID,
HATTER, I
DON'T WEAR
A HAT FOR
NOBODY.

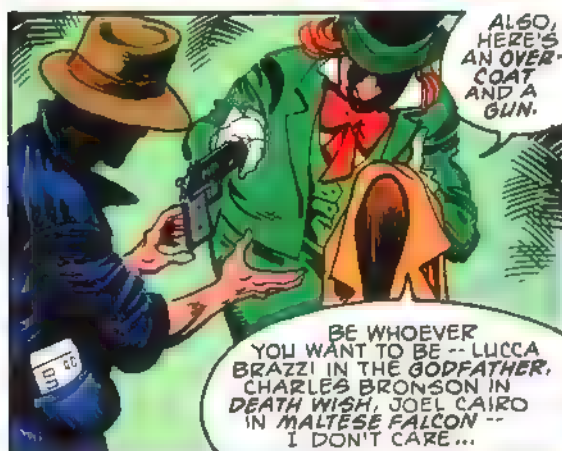
YEAH --
WHEN YOU INVITED
US TO YOUR PARTY
AFTER THE BREAKOUT,
YOU SAID WE COULD
KILL THE BATMAN.

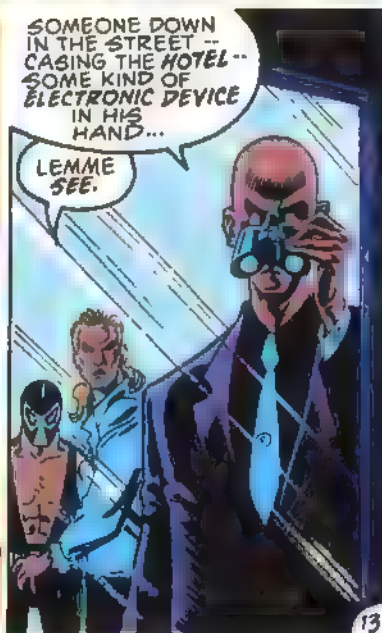
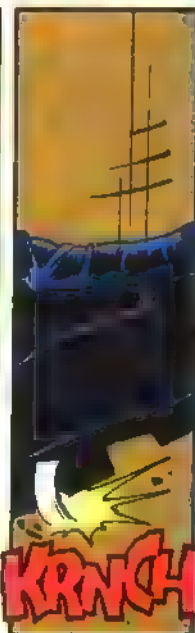
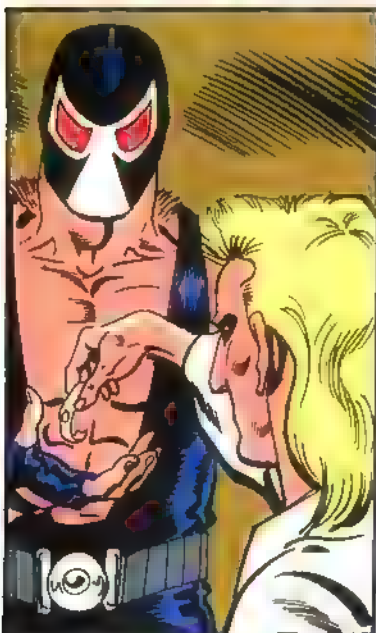
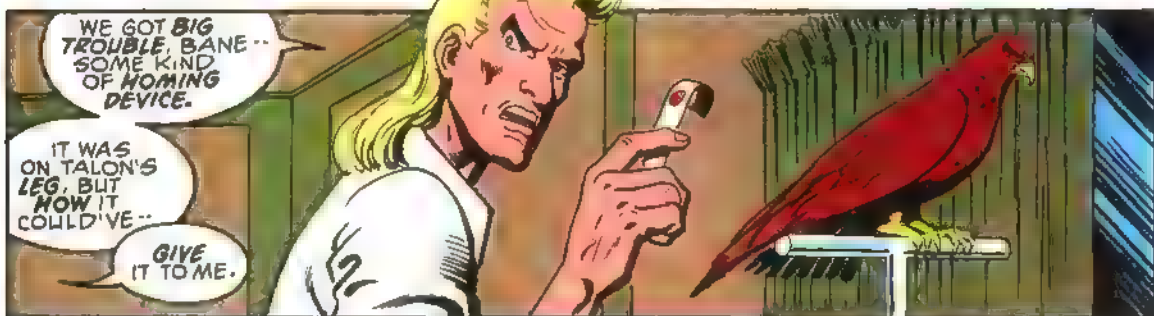
SO, WHERE
IS HE? AND WHAT'S
WEARIN' HATS
GOT TO DO WITH --

PUT ON THE
HATS!

NOW!









HOMING SIGNAL
JUST CUT OUT,
HATTER... AT
NORTHPOINT
AND
NINTH...



THERE'S A
HOTEL HERE. I'M
GOING TO TRY
THE SERVICE
ENTRANCE IN
THE ALLEY...

YOU
DO THAT,
FREAKIE-
BOY.

ANYONE
FOR MORE
TEA?

OO-
OO-AHH!



NOW



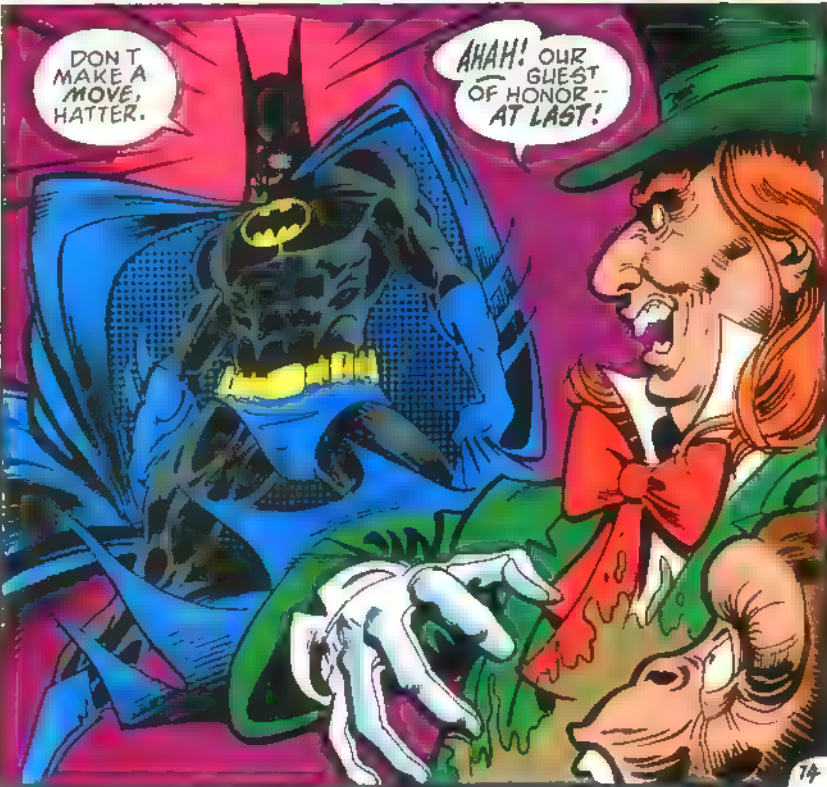
CHUSH

REEEEEE!



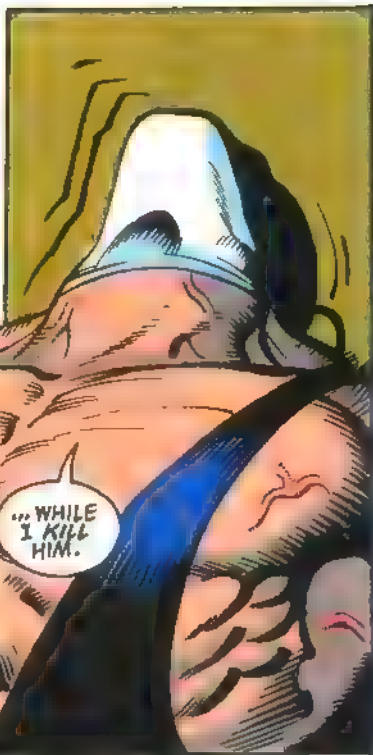
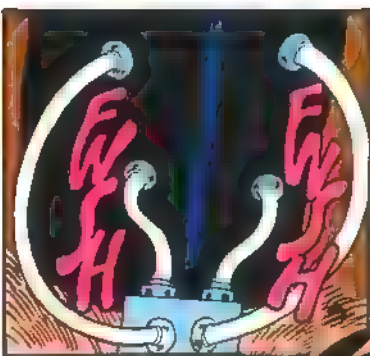
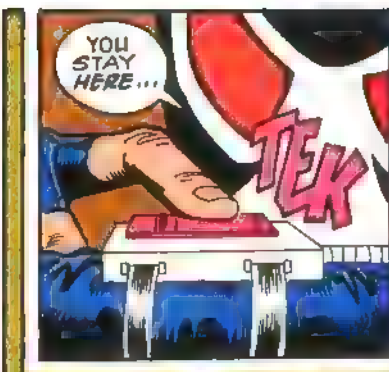
IT'S ONE OF
THE ARKHAM
INMATES, ALL
RIGHT -- THE
ONE CALLED
FILM
FREAK...

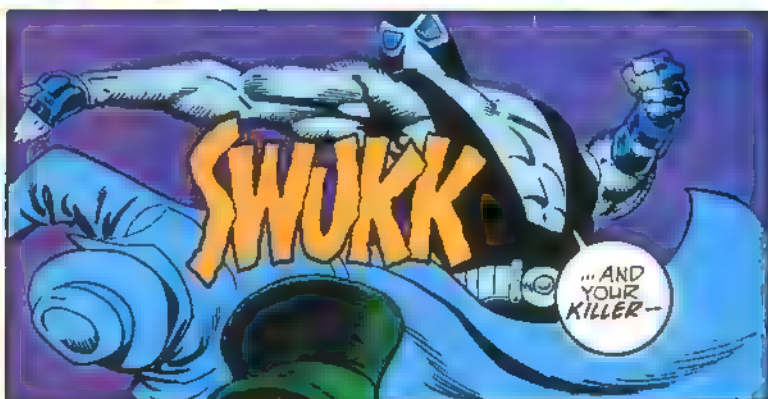
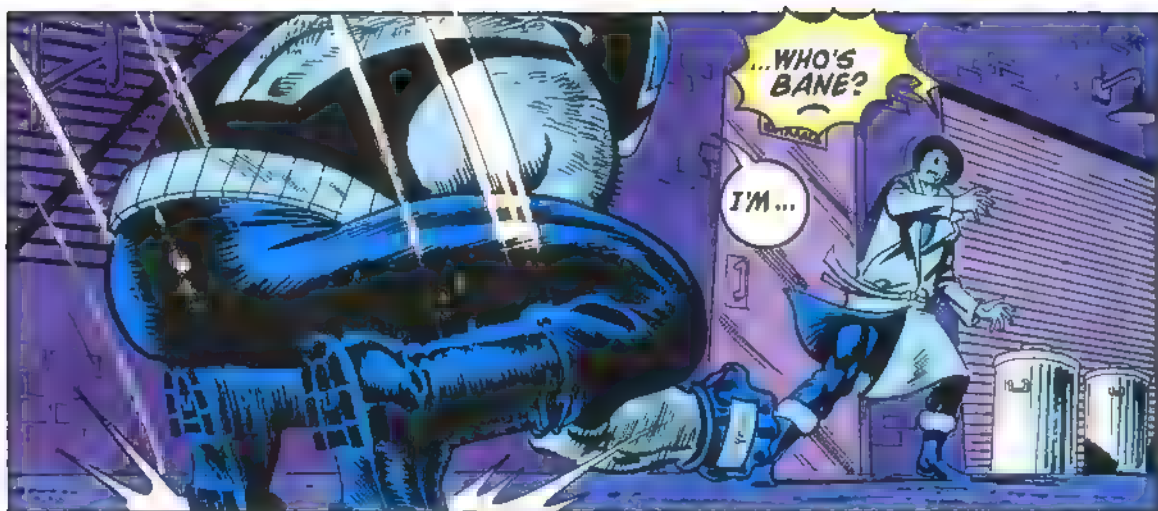
...HEADIN'
FOR THE
ALLEY.

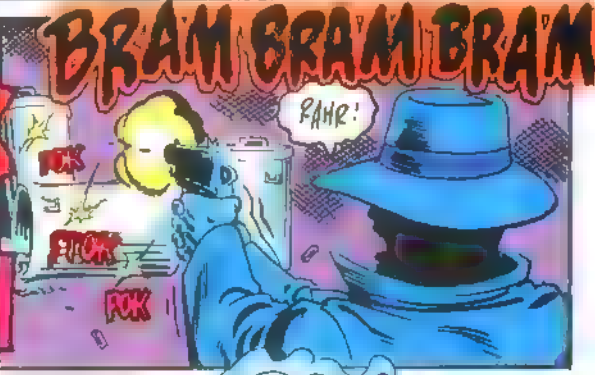
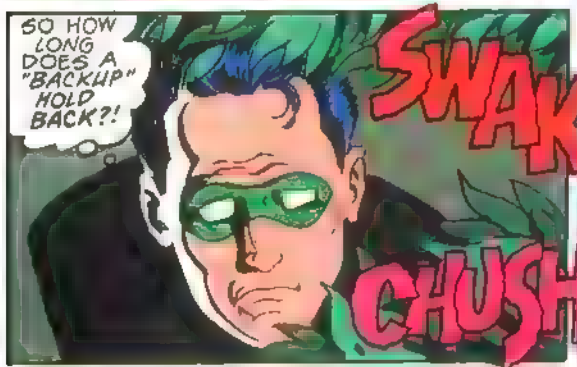
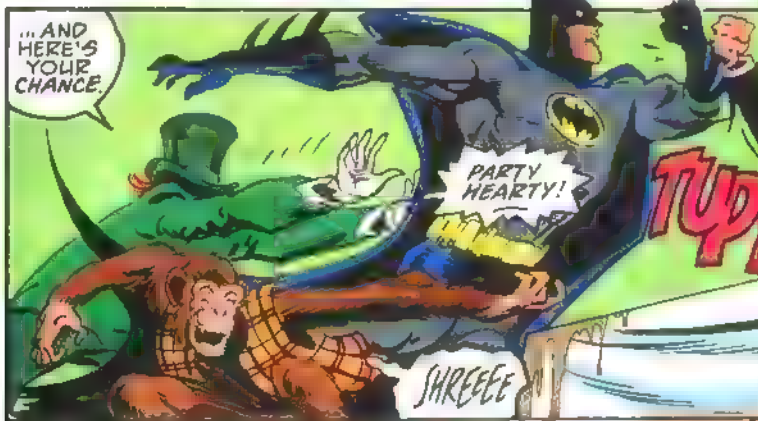
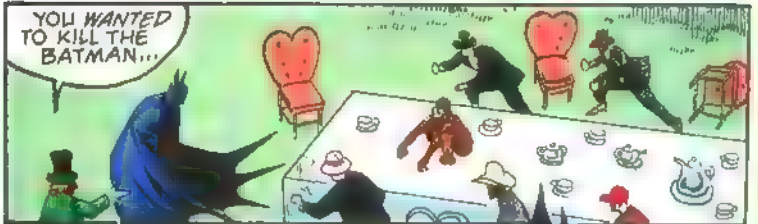


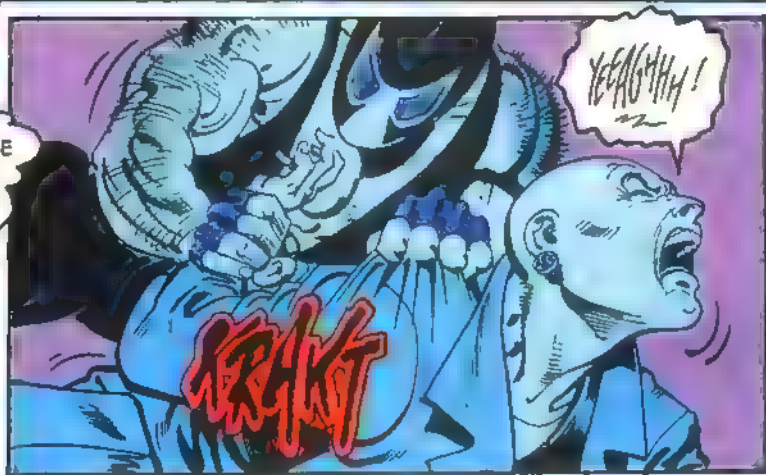
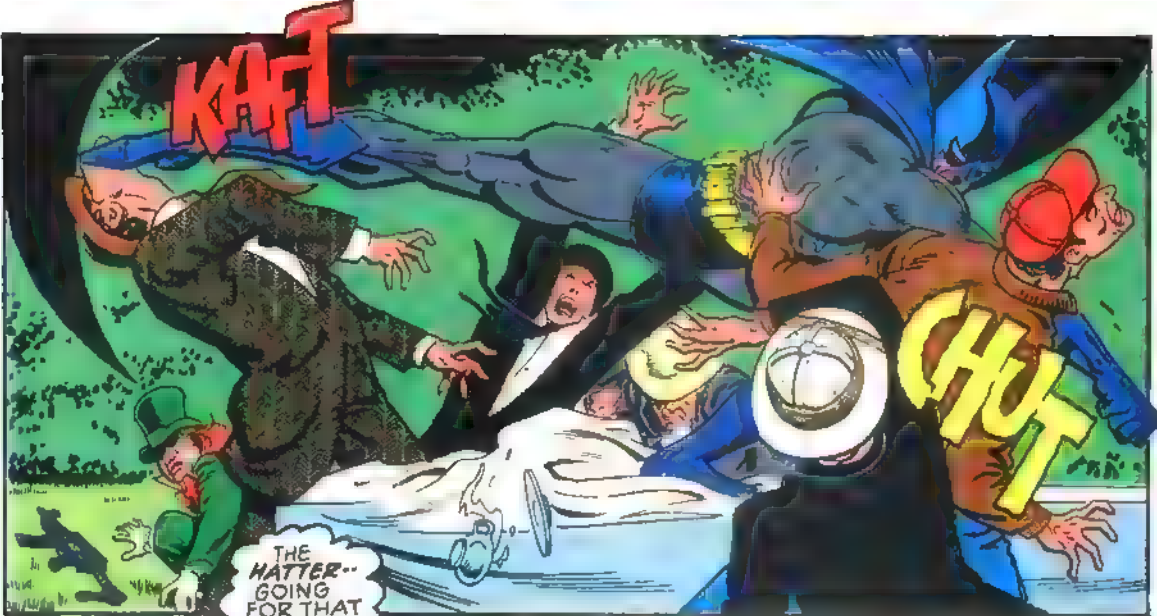
DON'T
MAKE A
MOVE,
HATTER.

AHAH! OUR
GUEST
OF HONOR --
AT LAST!

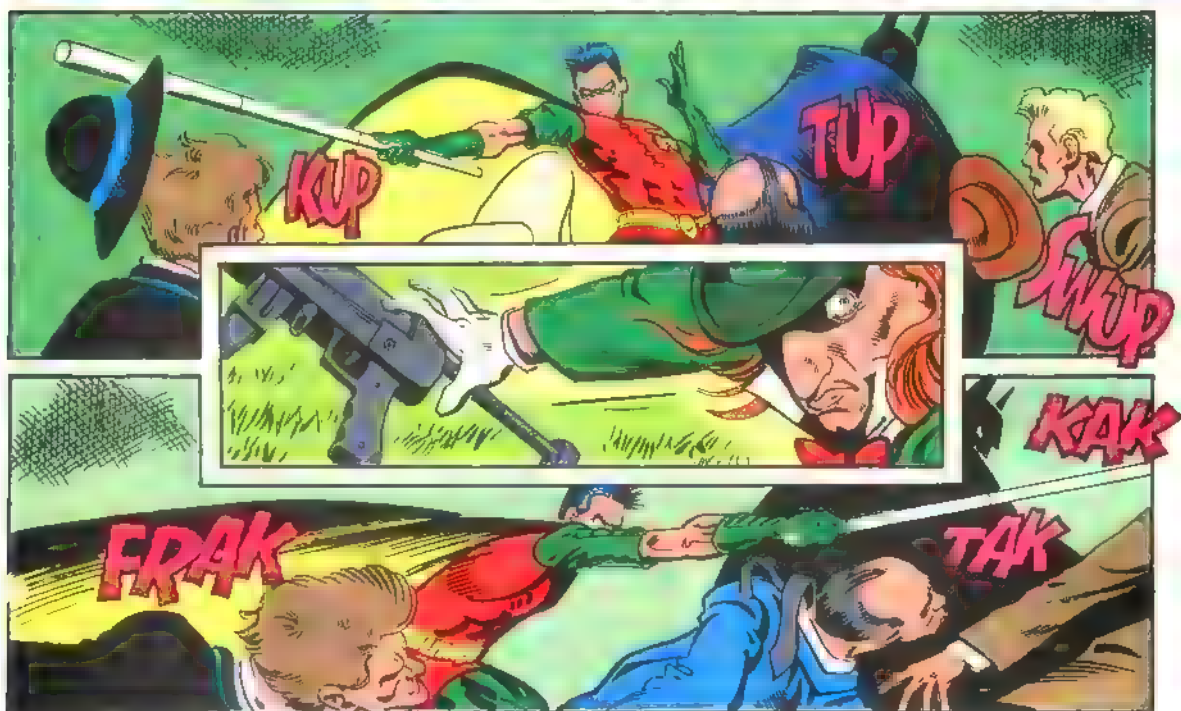


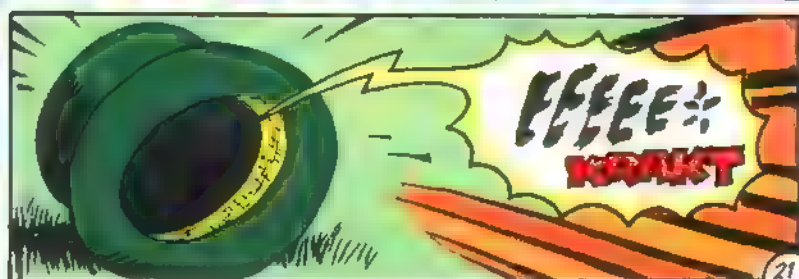
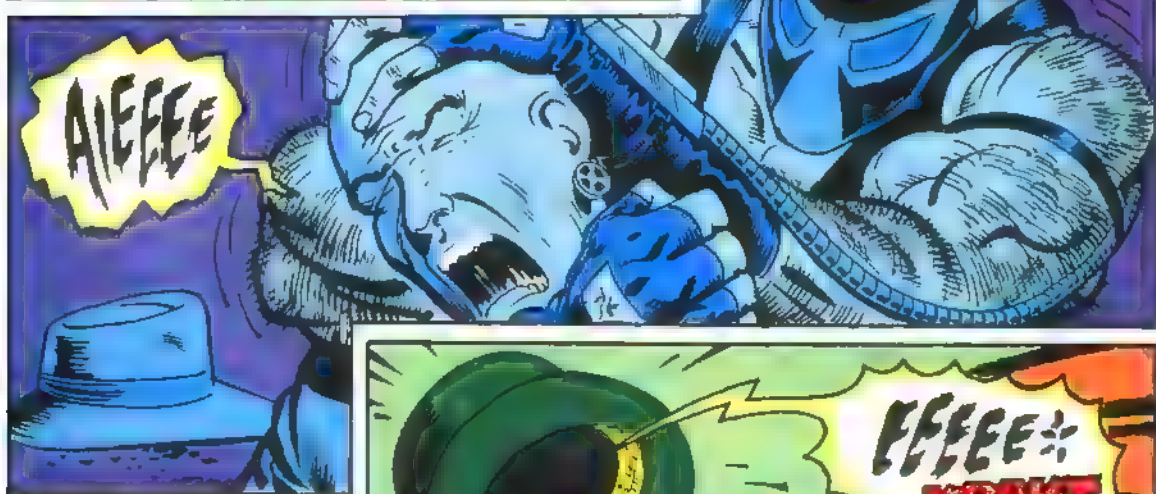
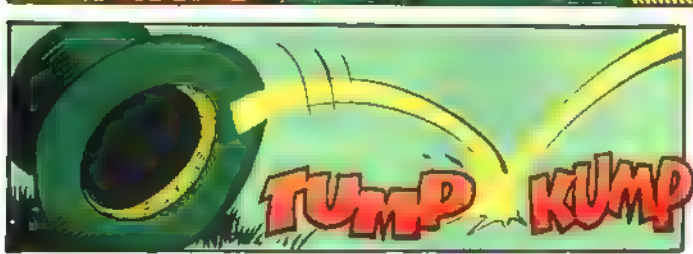
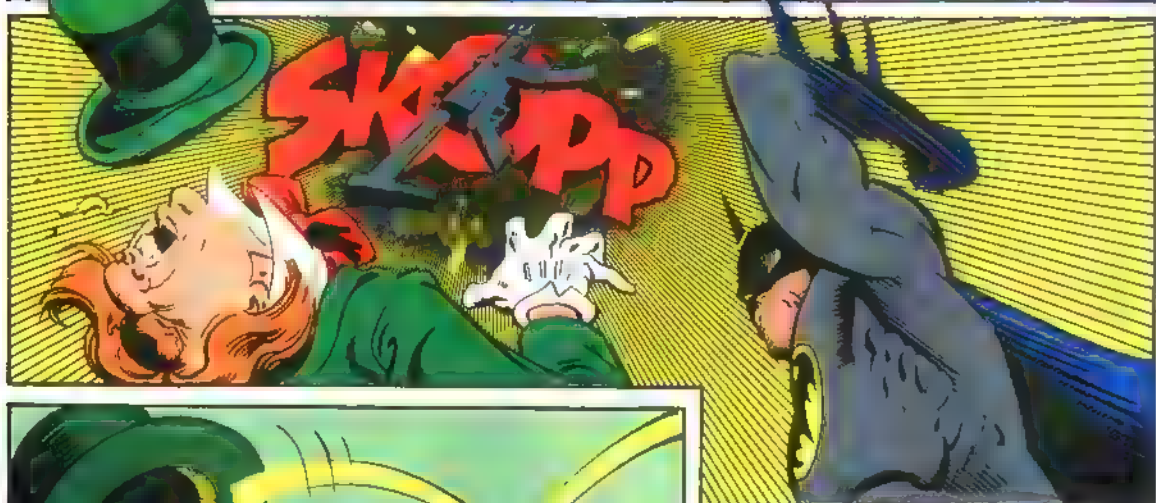


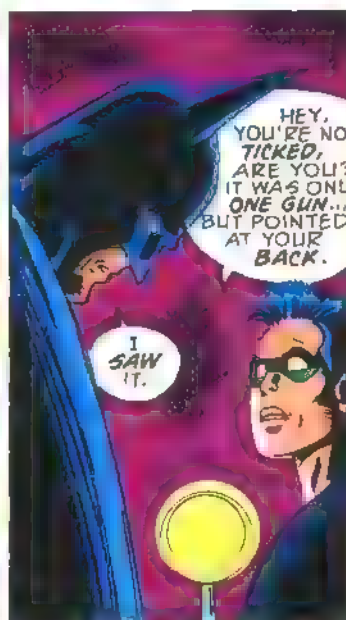
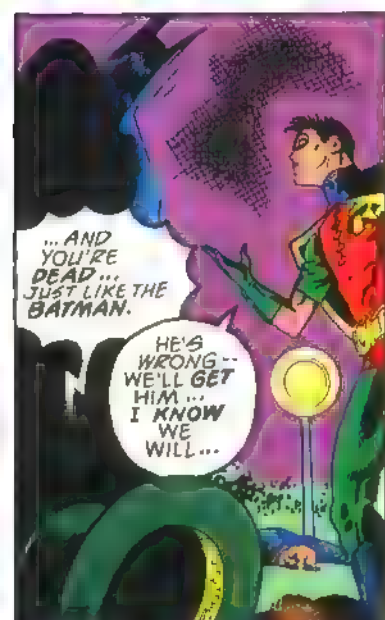












BAT-SIGNALS

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Dear Denny and Scott,
BATMAN #488 began with a superb cover featuring two boy wonders, pre-aging a very revealing portrayal of both.

Batman has enough confidence in his still relatively new partner to entrust the training of Azrael to him. And Tim has enough self-assurance not to feel threatened by the peer he is training, one whose raw power may overwhelm him. Azrael, for his part, willingly comes under the tutelage of the younger Robin.

I'm not certain that this relationship will not be without its fireworks, but I am confident that it will provide light on some of the shadows of Gotham City during Batman's forced leave.

Jan C. Childress
Brooklyn, NY

Couldn't have said it better myself, Jan.

Dear Scott,

So, Batman's psychological problems are getting worse in BATMAN #488. It's a good thing Azrael has joined the Batman world because Tim is going to need some help to keep the Gotham underworld under control while Batman sorts himself out. Something big will be necessary to shake Bruce out of his funk. Perhaps having to save Tim or Alfred might help.

I enjoyed seeing Robin and Azrael in action together. Azrael is a wonderful addition to the Batman mythos. Thanks to Denny for bringing him to us. It is indeed important to tone down Azrael's behavior before he is brought into the Batman family, especially since this reinforces the message you stated—Batman simply does not kill. Thanks for so perfectly stating why this is so.

James Evans
Madison, WI

Quite a few readers devoted their letters, or portions of them, to Scott's explanation in the letter column of BATMAN #488 of why Batman does not kill.

Dear Denny and Scott,

The cover alone of BATMAN #488 inspired me to write; however, it is not the subject of this letter.

The subject is a regular Robin series. I read a lot of letter pages in which readers, like myself, say they would like to see an ongoing Robin book. And always the same response follows: "No Robin series is in the works."

If this letter sees print, I would like to urge all readers to write and say, "A

Robin series will work. I'll buy two copies."

David C. Archie
Masphe, MA

I second the motion and move that we dispense with further formalities and vote! Readers?

Dear Scott,

I've been reading put-downs of BATMAN in several sources for a while. Some complained about how boring this title is compared to others. Well, BATMAN #488 must have changed all that.

I can't find one real fault with #488 and I would like to see someone else find one. Doug Moench, for starters, has gotten out of what I consider to be a slump period ("The Harpy," "Crash and Burn") and is back on track with his BATMAN scripts and the Catwoman story in SHOWCASE '93. I hope that Azrael begins to take center stage in this title, along with Tim Drake, a great character.

Doug wrote a great script for #488. It didn't rely on heavy battle scenes, just character interplay. I hope that Robin can become partners with Azrael, one of the better additions to the Batman mythos of late. Jean-Paul Valley will be a fascinating character in the future. The Order of St. Dumas is sure not to fade out of sight yet. The subplot with an ailing Bruce Wayne also looks interesting, although I have no clue what it is leading up to.

Jim Aparo, still in a class of his own, did another classic, superb job. I was just disappointed that Jim didn't get to draw Azrael in action; his interpretation of such a modern and visual character would surely have been fascinating. Jim did draw all the other characters wonderfully, and his art compares favorably to that of any other Bat-artist.

Finally, I wholeheartedly agree that using a gun opposes everything that the Batman stands for. Batman's lasted this long without one.

Keep up the great work, and put Hennigan and Aparo back on covers. I don't like Charest's style of art, although his Azrael was pretty neat!

Joey Marchese
Union, NJ

You are one of the few writers who did not immediately fall in love with Travis Charest's modern-looking cover, Joey. Guess you cannot please everyone all the time, although we certainly try. Write to tell us what you think of Kelley Jones's covers!

Dear Denny and Scott,

Doug Moench's characterization of Robin in BATMAN #488 was so acute that it read as well as Chuck Dixon's insightful work on that character. Doug was able to follow along with the "Robin bible" so well; it was wonderful.

Yet, this issue not only maintained character consistency with Robin but expanded on Batman's as well. Moench's Batman is unlike other writers'. His seemed to be a tired and weakening avenger, one who knows his time has passed, yet he strives to continue on. Still, like a good soldier, he knows the value of retreat. He will fight another day. But, does he want to? Has he lost sight of the goal that was once so clear? Where is his tao?

This internal conflict is novel and interesting, especially with this character who over the last decade has acted much like a rock. Even after Jason Todd's death, he fought on. Dare I say that I believe we are witness to the birth of a kinder and gentler Batman, a more human one? That he let Robin train Azrael, that he trusted his assistant to this task shows flexibility and is a healthy sign. I'm not sure where you're going with the character, but I think it's a move forward, not backward.

Much like The Shadow, The Batman seems to be forming an organization of operatives. Perhaps he won't be the loner any longer. I applaud you for this work and am looking forward to seeing how this ever fascinating character of the Batman progresses into the 21st century.

Mark Lucas
Los Angeles, CA

I never before thought to look at Batman's growing supporting cast of characters as an "organization of operatives," Mark, but I find the idea interesting.

I do not, however, think that Batman believes that "his time has passed" precisely because he does not know when it is time to retreat. This he has proven time and time again in recent issues of BATMAN.

Dear Scott,

Wow! I mean, the cover of BATMAN #488 is probably the best one on this title this year. The cover man deserves a raise!

Although Batman played a minor role in this issue, his influence was felt throughout the story. It was a good idea to let our bird-boy train Azrael—both have more than just their youth in common. Both also have enthusiasm and curiosity which the Batman forsakes in favor of grimness.

One last thing: Do you really think someone who graduated as a computer scientist would take a job as a low-grade security officer? I know the recession does not allow for a great selection of jobs, but isn't that a bit much?

the BLUE PANTHER
a.k.a. Kaashif Husain
Schwalbach, Germany

Oh, I don't know, Panther. I am schooled in fine arts, for example, and I chose to be a comic-book editor! (Ouch!)



Dear Batters,
Batman is brilliant!

Kevin Fred Garner
Manchester, England

Yeah!



Dear Editor,
BATMAN #488 was an educational look at the crime of industrial espionage in general.

As for Batman suffering from burnout, I applaud it. When a person shuts himself off from forms of relaxation and human comfort, he becomes a prime candidate for burnout. By these criteria, Batman should have been burned out six months after he first put on the mask. Some readers may say

burnout means Batman is weak. Nope. It means he is human. Too many stories have ignored the fact that The Batman is human and that he entered his current profession for basically humanitarian reasons. Most of all, he needs to be constantly reminded of his humanity. He tends to forget easily.

Nice after fifty years to see the "sling" back in full use as a Robin-style weapon. It was originally dropped after about a year's use, but most early fans remember it.

Charles D. Brown
Brentwood, NY

Sorry I had to edit down your usual well conceived comments, Charles, but space is running short. Yes, Batman is human, but he is nonetheless a super-hero. He may be potentially susceptible to human weakness, but only in extreme cases.

That having been said, the present storyline definitely presents one of those "extreme cases." I think many of us—I include myself in this count—find it almost gratifying, perhaps even cathartic, to see Batman affected by exhaustion and other very human foibles because it reinforces the very quality that makes him so appealing in ways other super-heroes are not—his humanity. Ultimately, any of us could be Batman, and that is very exciting.

That is all for now, folks. Things are really heating up and coming to a boil in the Bat-books, so I hope you stick around! Remember, both BATMAN and DETECTIVE COMICS are biweekly now and for the next couple of months. We at DC believe that no one should have to wait longer than a week to see what happens next in a terrific storyline like "Knightfall!"

MTGGFLF,
Gorf

—When you get a tan,
don't forget the ten.

IN DETECTIVE COMICS The Ventriloquist and Amygdala tear apart Gotham City looking for Scarface. It's Batman vs. Amygdala and Robin vs. Bird (kind of appropriate, isn't that?) with Knightfall Part 2 in DETECTIVE #659 by Chuck "Woody" Dixon and—yes!—guest artist Norm Breyfogle.

IN SHADOW Kadaver is ready to let loose 50,000 killer fleas on Gotham, and the stores are all out of Tiger's famous flea powder! It's nail-(and flea-)biting time in SHADOW OF THE BAT #12 by Alan Grant and Vince Giarrano.

IN BATADV Killer Croc pursues the one man ever to best him—the hired muscle of the man Batman wants to take down! It's scaled-up action in THE BATMAN ADVENTURES #7 by Puckett, Parobeck and Burchett.

HERE, IN TWO WEEKS Doug Moench and Norm Breyfogle are in absolute top form depicting serial killer-maniac Zsasz stalking a girls' boarding school. Can an exhausted Batman rescue Zsasz's captives before Zsasz messes up his mind? It's psychological horror with Knightfall Part 3 in BATMAN #493 by Doug "We're Hot Now" Moench and Norm "Can't Get Enough of a Good Thing" Breyfogle!

This issue's cover was drawn by Kelley Jones, colored by Bob LeRose and cover-edited by Curtis King.



BAT-POINT/COUNTERPOINT

Often times I receive letters espousing completely opposite positions on the same subject. I thought it might be interesting to contrast a pair of those. So, look out, Dan and Jane: it is time for Bat-point/Counterpoint! Today's subject is "The Characterization of Tim Drake/Robin."

First, our Bat-point-man:

Hey, Scott,

Re the cover of BATMAN #488:

WOW! COOL! AWESOME! SPECTACULAR! KICK BUTT!

Re the rest of BATMAN #488:

Very disappointing. Even though this issue featured two of comics' best rising stars, Robin and Azrael, it was nowhere near as good as it could have been. First off, aside from the cover, we didn't even get to see Azrael in costume! The bigger problem, though, was in the characterization of Tim Drake.

Tim is a confident young man who acts beyond his years. Doug Moench, however, wrote Tim as an overconfident, stuck-up smart aleck. Tim would never purposely act like such a stuck-up jerk around others—and certainly not around a dangerous antihero—like he did when he ordered Azrael around. Tim is a kid, yes, and he's bound to use some of today's lingo. I disapprove of lines like, "Yo, Az—I said chill..." which make Robin seem like a stereotypical teenager as portrayed in television commercials.

Oh, and Jim Aparo did a good job on the art.

Jason Crase
Arlington Heights, IL

Now for the counterpoint:

To the Batcave,

With BATMAN #488, Doug Moench proved that he knows that Robin is more than just a hip-talking tag-along. He showed that Robin is a competent and valuable character. Robin giving lessons to Azrael (gasp!) of all people was a great subplot. I like it.

Meanwhile, Bruce looks like he is in need of some serious medical attention. Please resolve this quickly; Batman should be out on the streets.

What is the deal with people hating Tim's spike 'do? I say, keep the spiked hair!

And, yes, there is a Robin Fan Club. Contact me for details!

Jay McIntyre
3 Meadow Lane
Doylestown, PA 18901

Well, readers, what did you think of today's episode of Bat-point/Counter-point? More to the, uh, point, with whom do you agree? Write in and let me know!

Incidentally, Jay's letter also has the dubious honor of marking the historic opening of the very first official Robin hair-style debate of the modern age of comics! Readers—en garde! (If Tim himself could enter this duel, he would undoubtedly use his hair as his weapon.)



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GCPD Guy



Driven mad by the light of the scanner, these men
have been committed - to excellence

JANUSREDWAY

GCPD-Guy

DogwtSixEyes

THE INSOMNIACS